



Australian Bureau of Statistics

Education Services

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Resources



GEO 03 – Population Distribution

You can download this activity as a rich text file (RTF) using the links at the bottom of the page.

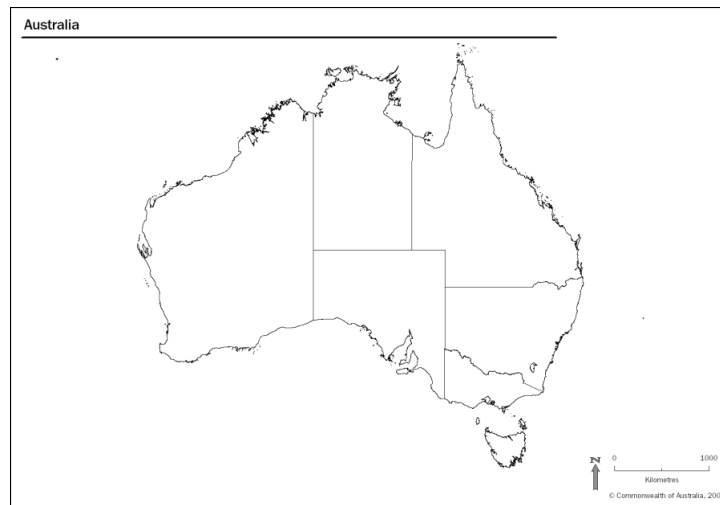
Subject Area	Geography
Suggested Level	Years 9–10
Overview	This classroom activity uses the Year Book Australia, 2008 (cat. no. 1301.0) to look at the distribution of population in Australia. It examines the methods used to represent distribution. In addition, the manner in which geographers describe a distribution pattern is modelled. Factors affecting the distribution are classified into social, historical, environmental, economic and political in order to explain the distribution of population.
Requirements	• Attachment, Map of Australian states and territories

Instructions

Representing the Distribution of Population

1. Ask the students to use their own knowledge and without reference to an atlas or textbook, to show the distribution of population in Australia using a map of Australia (see attachment at the bottom of this page).
2. Working in groups, students should compare their distribution patterns and the methods chosen to represent the distribution.
3. Students should compare their maps with the distribution of population map (Figure 1). On Figure 1, the distribution of population is shown by small dots. Each dot represents 1,000 persons.
4. Ask students to identify the advantages or disadvantages of representing population distribution as a dot distribution.

FIGURE 1: DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION IN AUSTRALIA



Describing the Distribution of Population in Australia

Students describe the distribution of population from Figure 1 and support their response with data drawn from the map and appropriate geographic conventions. These guidelines may help:

- Is the population **evenly** or **unevenly** spread?
- Where do **most** people live?
- Where do **least** people live?
- How does the pattern change across the area?
- Are there exceptions to the pattern described above?

Explaining the Distribution of Population

1. Ask students to brainstorm their own reasons to explain the distribution of population in Australia or use the list provided in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1: FACTORS AFFECTING THE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION IN AUSTRALIA			
Coastal areas first settled	Raw materials present	Water supply present	Too cold
Tax incentives encourage settlement in remote areas	Fertile soils	Market centres for surrounding agricultural area	Arid < 250 mm or rainfall
Well served by transport	Access to the sea for trade	Government encourages settlement	Gold rush encouraged people to move inland
Lowland	Annual rainfall above 600 mm	Sea views make coastal areas attractive for settlement	Sheltered harbours

2. Classify these factors into social, historical, environmental, economic and political. Some factors may be classified in more than one category.
3. Students choose one factor from each category and discuss its influence on the population distribution in Australia.

Extension

Compare the distribution of the Australian population (Figure 1) with the distribution of the indigenous population using figure 7.23 in Year Book Australia, 2008 (cat no. 1301.0), noting that the legend is different on each map.

Glossary

Distribution of Population

Distribution of population is the spread or arrangement of something over an area.

References

Note: Links to ABS publications are to the most recent release. Previous releases can be accessed by selecting the 'Past & Future Releases' tab.

Year Book Australia, 2008 (cat. no. 1301.0)

Download the Activity

Student Activity



Geo_03_Pop Distribution_Student Worksheet.rtf

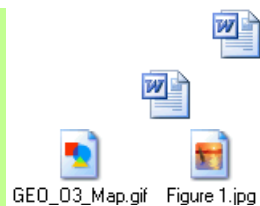
Geo_03_Pop Distribution_Student Worksheet 2.rtf

Geo_03_Pop Distribution_Student Worksheet 3 extn.rtf

Teacher Solutions

Marking Rubric

Attachments



Geo_03_Pop Distribution_Teacher Answer Sheet.rtf
Geo_03 Pop Distribution Rubric2.rtf

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